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# Sketches of Kansas Pioneer Experience.

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BY

WILLIAM HUTCHINSON.

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## SKETCHES OF KANSAS PIONEER EXPERIENCE.

Written by WILLIAM HUTCHINSON,\* of Washington, D. C., for the Kansas State Historical Society.

I WAS often urged by the late Judge Adams, as secretary of the Kansas State Historical Society, to write sketches of my Kansas life for the use of the said Society, and he represented that others of my coworkers, or some of them, were doing so; but I as often declined to attempt the task, partly because I doubted whether I could write much that would be of general interest at this late day, and partly because of my increasing aversion to any labor of this sort. Since the death of Judge Adams, others have made the same request of me, and more especially on the score that there are now so few remaining to tell the story of early Kansas conflicts and trials, that it becomes rather a duty on the part of those who were actors to leave to posterity some traces of their footprints. As a further reason, it is urged that, when so much has been badly written of pretended Kansas history—some by authors who were not born until after Kansas became a state—those who have personal knowledge and were living witnesses of the early events should surely be first heard.

This will be no attempt, however, to write a history of Kansas, nor to write a full Kansas chapter of my own biography, but rather to portray some personal incidents in my Kansas experience, and show my relation to, or agency in, some of the public affairs during our territorial period.

As a sort of preface or index to what follows, I may state that I went from Vermont to Kansas with my family in the early spring of 1855, and located at Lawrence when there was but one building on the site made of sawed lumber, viz., the office of Emery † & Hutchinson (my brother John, who went there the fall before, was of that firm), and I immediately bought a town share, as they were termed, of ten city lots, with a log cabin on one lot, in which I lived with my family over a year. Formed a partnership for mercantile business with G. W. Hutchinson and Oscar Harlow, and we commenced the erection of a stone-concrete building, fifty feet square, on Massachusetts street. This was among the first stone buildings built there, and when completed the first story and cellar were used for the store, and the upper story for our family residences. It was April 1, 1855, when I first stepped upon Kansas soil, and almost with the first breath began those stirring scenes that soon supplanted public order and domestic peace. The second election under Governor Reeder, of March 30, had just taken place two days before, and the roads were thronged with returning Missouri

\* WILLIAM HUTCHINSON was born January 24, 1823, in Randolph, Vt.; hence his journalistic *nom de plume*. He was brought up on a farm, where hard work was the highest accomplishment. His education was in the common schools, with a few academic terms added. He taught school several winters, after the country fashion, and "boarded around." March 3, 1847, he married Helen M. Fish, of the same town. In 1852 he left the farm, moved to the village, and became editor and publisher of *The Green Mountain Herald*, that he conducted with fair success, as a weekly paper, until his removal to Kansas, in the early spring of 1855. He was first identified with the abolition or free-soil party, until the organization of the republican party, when he joined its ranks, and has continued a steadfast adherent. He was an early and persistent advocate of temperance and other reforms, but always sought to reach his ends within his party, rather than by isolated organizations.—G. W. M.

† For biographical sketch of James S. Emery, see volume VI of the Society's Historical Collections, page 223.

voters. They were all in two-horse farm wagons, carrying guns, whisky bottles, and camp-kettles. This weird and ragged crowd who had just cast their ballots to enslave Kansas was my first object lesson in my newly-chosen field. As my education had been in the antislavery school, it was but natural that I should have felt an earnest desire to make Kansas a free state.

Of the early Kansas troubles, so called, and their multiform events, volumes have already been written that I have no cause to repeat here. I will, however, note a few of the civil affairs of the territory, with which I was more or less connected in a humble way, wherein the first person singular will be conspicuously found. The first celebration of the Fourth of July\* ever held on Kansas soil was in the grove near Lawrence, in 1855: a genuine old-fashioned time, when I gave an address, among many others. My theme was "The Dignity of Labor." The general friction that soon arose between the free-state and the proslavery parties in the territory early led to a state bordering on anarchy and civil war, and as the free-state people had no use for the Missouri-made laws and officials, they were compelled to act through committees with some form of organization. First they had a "committee of safety": then a state central committee. I was the secretary, and for a time also the treasurer, of such committee. It was the province of this committee, as defined by the largest mass convention† ever held in Kansas up to that time, to take in charge all matters, financial as well as civil, of a public or protective character. We conducted all correspondence and transacted the business for the settlers with the governor and other officials, as the written history of that period shows. Later on, when, owing to our privations, we were compelled to ask aid from the East, all contributions were received and distributed by this committee, until Mr. Army interfered, as I will show hereafter. The position of the secretary and treasurer was then no sinecure.

A people's convention was held October 28, 1856, at Big Springs, to nominate a delegate to Congress, when I was elected secretary, and the first ballot resulted as follows: M. J. Parrott, 63; A. H. Reeder, 51; Wm. Hutchinson, 21; S. C. Pomeroy, 3; J. M. Winchell, 12; scattering, 4. On the final vote Governor Reeder was chosen. This vote for me was wholly unsolicited. I was not a candidate, and had never asked for a vote.

In the winter of 1856-'57 I returned to Vermont and raised a party of about thirty, who went back with me. I took them into southern Kansas, as we called it then, and we settled on the Little Osage river, in Bourbon county, where all took claims near "Timber Hills." It was called the "Vermont colony." We selected one quarter-section for a town-site, and staked our claims around it for occupancy under the preemption act. When in camp the first evening, May 12, 1857, the question arose: "What shall be the name of our town?" The party insisted that it should bear my name, but I was too modest to allow it. To satisfy them, I agreed that I would give it a name, with their permission. They finally assented. "Timber Hills" were noted for their sugar-maple trees, but rarely found in Kansas, so far as I then knew. I therefore gave our town the name of Mapleton. I afterwards learned there was then one other town in the United States so named. There are now twenty. The claim adjoining the town site on the east was taken by Judge J. C. Burnett,‡ and I took the one next east

\* Lewis & Clark, 1804, at the mouth of Independence creek, in Doniphan county, on the Missouri. (Hist. Soc. Coll., vol. I, p. 38.)

† Free-state convention at Topeka, July 2-4, 1856. (Andreas, p. 140.)

‡ JONATHAN C. BURNETT was born March 19, 1825, in Morristown, Vt.; emigrated to Kansas in 1857; practiced law in Bourbon and adjacent counties; delegate to Wyandotte constitutional convention, 1859; member of last territorial house of representatives, and of the first state senate, 1861; register of United States land-office, Fort Scott and Humboldt, 1861-'65; removed to Lawrence in 1865, and became director and land commissioner of the Leavenworth, Lawrence & Galveston Railroad Company. His death occurred at Wichita, July 3, 1899.



of his. As I had a house and business in Lawrence, I was unable to occupy this claim continuously. I built on it a frame cottage, broke and fenced ten acres, and was there off and on, hoping to secure my preemption title. A few times I took my family there. Later on, owing to my frequent absence from the claim, J. M. Hoffnagle "jumped" the claim, and became my contestant. This finally resulted in a decision, on appeal here to the general land-office in Washington, against both of us. But in spite of my action at Mapleton, Kansas has a city named Hutchinson. In my Vermont party there was a Clinton C. Hutchinson, a cousin of my business partner, and he stopped in Lawrence with his cousins and did not follow us down to southern Kansas. At a later period he became interested with S. C. Pomeroy and others in Santa Fé railroad speculations that opened the way for him to make a strike for the Arkansas river valley, and this resulted in a town site being located in Reno county that was named after him.

#### THE PEOPLE'S TOPEKA CONVENTION.

I shall only glance at the successive steps by which the people of the territory, who had repudiated the laws made by the Missouri invaders, undertook to frame a government of their own choice and to rid themselves of the bogus government.\* The primary step was taken in a mass convention at Lawrence August 14, 1856. This set in motion the Big Springs convention, and following this was the Topeka convention in "Constitution hall," where the Topeka constitution was framed, providing for the complete machinery of a state government. The first legislature elected under this constitution assembled at Topeka March 4, 1856, and was dispersed by federal troops under Colonel Sumner† at the second session, July 4, 1856. Another legislature under the same constitution met at Topeka January 4, 1858, when I was a member of the house, and I was elected speaker *pro tem.* of that body. The territorial legislature was also in session in Lawrence at the same time. Harris Stratton, who was a member of both bodies, was elected speaker of the house in the Topeka legislature; but as he chose to act with the territorial body throughout the term, I was practically the speaker during all their sittings. This is no place to explain the friction that existed between these two legislatures. It is sufficient to say that, after a fruitless labor of several weeks, in an effort to secure the abdication of the territorial legislature and allow the state government under the Topeka constitution to go into actual operation, we adjourned, and issued a lengthy address, about four newspaper columns in length, to the people of Kansas. The closing paragraph and signatures to this were as follows:

"We are thus compelled by a necessity that leaves us no choice to adjourn for the present, and to refer back to the people who elected us the question as to whether the Topeka constitution is dead. Under a fearful opposition from a despotic federal power, and under a torrent of malignant abuse and falsification from pretended friends, we have endeavored to vindicate the rights of an unquestionable majority of the people of Kansas. A few years will serve to develop the justice and propriety of our course; to that future we can leave it. We offer this evidence that we have never voluntarily abandoned our duty, and will resume it the moment you enable us.

WM. HUTCHINSON,

B. B. NEWTON,

CHARLES MAYO,

J. M. WALDEN,

L. MARTIN,

WM. A. PHILLIPS, *Chairman.*

J. M. HENDRY,

W. F. M. ARNY,

*Senate Committee."*

*House Committee.*

\*"The Rejected Constitutions," by T. Dwight Thacher, appeared in volume III, Collections of the Historical Society, page 436, and makes a very full statement of events relating to these three instruments.

†EDWIN VOSE SUMNER, born in Boston, January 30, 1797, was educated at Milton (Mass.) Academy, and entered the army in 1819 as second lieutenant of infantry. He served in the Black

The story of the early troubles in Kansas has been too often written to require any mention here, further than to say that Lawrence and vicinity was the center of those border strifes termed the "Wakarusa war," and for weary months and years I was in my place in the free-state ranks battling for the civil liberties of the people. As a member of Governor Robinson's or General Lane's staff, or as a volunteer, I was in the battle of Fort Titus, the battle of Washington Creek, the battle of Franklin, and of Bull Creek, so called, and all the other engagements of that vicinity. But for this I claim no merit whatever, for all our free-state men were doing the same in a common cause. For nearly two years we kept a light burning every night in our sleeping-rooms, with firearms within easy reach. The sacking of Lawrence, May 21, 1856, by a posse of United States officers, will be ever memorable, and I stood near General Atchison when he pointed their cannon at the Free-state hotel. I saw and heard all.

It will not be irrelevant, I think, to introduce an incident here, in keeping with my general purpose. Intense excitement and general fear prevailed, immediately following the destruction of Lawrence. With many others, Governor Reeder\* was anxious to find a place of greater safety. Disguised as a deck-hand, he escaped from Kansas on a boat down the Missouri river to a freer atmosphere, but he did not dare to carry any important papers that were to be essential for his mission or future work. These papers were left in charge of Col. Shaler W. Eldridge, who had kept the hotel just demolished. Neither did he (Colonel Eldridge) dare to carry the papers out of Kansas himself, but he thought if some lady would go with him, they might be hidden in her clothing. He therefore called for some lady to volunteer for the hazardous task. My late wife, Helen M. Hutchinson, who died over two years ago, offered to go with him. The morning of May 23, 1856, she secreted the consignment of papers, and left Lawrence with Colonel Eldridge for Kansas City, displaying a degree of courage, as well as patriotism, richly deserving this brief mention. Colonel Eldridge wrote me a short time before he died that he was preparing a history of that affair for the Historical Society, in which he intended to do her full justice, and he said there was no lady in Kansas more deserving. I have never heard whether his purpose was fulfilled. As I recollect, they were intercepted on the way by bands of ruffians, but finally got through with the papers in safety. In one of the late annual meetings of reunions of the old settlers of Kansas, I think this incident was referred to as a notable deed.

#### A KANSAS CORRESPONDENT.†

Early in 1855, or soon after my arrival in Kansas, I felt the necessity of giving the people of the States, especially in the East, the fullest information possible of the condition of affairs in the territory. As I had previously edited and published a weekly paper, it was but natural for me to take up the pen for some Eastern journal. I began by writing letters for the *Vermont Watchman*, printed at the state capital. As this was but a weekly paper, I soon saw that would not

Hawk war, and then distinguished himself as an Indian fighter on the frontier. In 1838 he had command of the school of cavalry practice at Carlisle, Pa. In the Mexican war he led the cavalry charge at Cerro Gordo, in April, 1847, and checked the advance of 5000 Mexican lancers at Molino del Rey. He was governor of New Mexico in 1851-'53, and visited Europe to report on improvements in cavalry. In 1857, as colonel of the First cavalry, he led a successful expedition against the Cheyennes. For report of this expedition, see page 489, volume IV, of the Society's Collections. While stationed at Leavenworth he dispersed the Topeka free-state legislature, on July 4, 1856. The fourth and fifth volumes of the Society's Collections contain many of his letters relative to military affairs in the territory. He served gallantly during the early part of the rebellion, dying in Syracuse, N. Y., March 21, 1863.

\*See Governor Reeder's escape from Kansas, Historical Society Collections, volume III, page 205.

†See Colonel Hinton's "Pens that Made Kansas Free," in the Historical Society's Collections, volume VI, page 371.

do, and then engaged to write for the *Boston Journal*. In a short time I became the special correspondent for the *New York Times*, over the signature RANDOLPH (the name of my native town), and in that field I labored diligently during my stay in Kansas, or some seven years. At times I also wrote for the *Chicago Tribune*, over the name of VIGIL, and for the *St. Louis Democrat* and *Washington Republic*, over different names. Col. Wm. A. Phillips was the correspondent of the *New York Tribune* during the same period. We were often together in our labors, and I think it was generally conceded that our correspondence exceeded that of all other writers from Kansas combined. It was our business to seek the fields of greatest civil, political or military strife, and to tell the world about it in our own way.

Henry J. Raymond was then the editor of the *New York Times*, and he was emphatically conservative, and he would not tolerate any tincture of liberalism: just the antipodes of Greeley, of the *Tribune*. Our numerous provocations kept our pulse at fever heat, and I soon found it difficult to work within the prescribed tracks. But I found partial relief in this way: After some of my red-hot letters had been returned to me, as requested, if not published, I arranged to use the *Boston Journal* or the *Boston Telegraph* as safety-valves, and directed that all letters not used by the *Times* should be forwarded to one of the said Boston papers, and they were always accepted and published. Raymond at times would even apologize for our governors (we had many of them) and President Buchanan, in his editorials, while we had no use for any of them. Not a few of my letters to journals were captured by the border ruffians, as were also those written by Colonel Phillips, so that in many instances the chain was broken by their loss.

When Horace Greeley came to Kansas, in 1859, to attend the Osawatimie republican convention, I was speaking to him about my difficulty with the *Times*, and he urged me by all means to continue as I was doing, rather than try to engage with a radical paper. He said: "You cannot possibly do as much good in any other way. The *Times* is read by a class of people who need enlightening. Those who read my paper are right already, and need no converting. Even if half of your letters are returned, don't you give it up." To show clearly our relations and my predicament, I will give a copy of a part of one of Mr. Raymond's letters when returning mine to me:

"TIMES OFFICE, NEW YORK, October 10, 1857.

"My Dear Sir: I comply with your request and return the enclosed manuscript. If it would have done any good to publish it that time has passed, as the election is over, and the result will show which side was right better than anything else. For my own part, I have no doubt whatever that Kansas will be a free state, and that the present administration (Buchanan and Walker) will make it so. Not that they are free-soil men, or care much about freedom or slavery *per se*, but they are party men, and their party necessities will force them into that channel. Of course, you who are on the spot may see abundant reason for the course which your section of the free-state party takes, but here there is not one man in ten even of the republicans who considers it wise, or sympathizes with it in the least. This may be all wrong and very foolish on the part of the public, but it is true nevertheless. I suppose it is difficult or perhaps impossible for you to assume an impartial tone in your letters, but I must frankly say that without this, or unless they give all facts on both sides with equal fairness, they are of no use to the *Times*. I will send all we do not use to the *Boston Telegraph*, as you request. Very truly yours, H. J. RAYMOND."

The *Times* was professedly a republican paper, but of the most conservative type. How sadly Mr. Raymond was mistaken in his opinion of the purposes of the then administration later events fully proved. It was that same administration that either caused or winked at all our troubles.

## DISTURBANCES IN SOUTHERN KANSAS.

During the struggles and trials and bloody conflicts of 1855, '56, and '57, I continued to write for the Eastern papers, and told the story of our experiences as best I could, and then came a season of comparative peace and quiet, until troubles were renewed in southern Kansas; that is, mainly in Linn and Bourbon counties. From the fact that I had a claim at Mapleton, I was led to often visit that section, and became the more interested in their affairs. During 1858 the old issues of slavery and antislavery were being renewed in that region, with local modifications, and traces of personal animosities. James Montgomery,\* of Linn county, soon became a recognized leader of the free-state settlers. Doctor Jennison, of the same county, was soon heard from, and John Brown was spending much of his time near them or in the adjoining county of Lykins (now Miami). I often met them, and whenever Captain Montgomery came to Lawrence my house was always his home. Jennison and Brown were occasional visitors. On the other hand, when I took my trips to Mapleton I frequently went by way of Montgomery's prairie home on the Little Sugar, four or five miles above Mound City, and I stayed many nights with them. My outfit was always an Indian pony, and it made but little difference whether I found a traveled road or not. It was only necessary in those days to find one, or an Indian trail, when crossing a stream. I remember I kept on the "divides," and headed most of the streams on the route to Montgomery's. At one time, I think it was in 1858, I remember I was at Mapleton July 2, and I had an engagement to take part in a Fourth of July celebration at Burlington, on the Neosho river. I started on the morning of the 3d with my ever-faithful pony, *overland*, to find my way to Burlington, when there were no roads in that direction. But very few cabins of settlers were seen on the way. I had no guide but a small map of Kansas. I followed the divides as far as possible, gave Mr. Pony about an hour for grazing at noon, and reached Burlington before sunset. I did not know the distance then, but I now find the distance to be nearly sixty miles in a straight line. I did not follow ten miles of road all day, and was on hand for the celebration the next day.

## JOHN BROWN AND HIS REVOLVERS.

In the spring of 1858 John Brown went to Canada to organize or perfect his scheme to liberate all the slaves in the United States, and there at the town of Chatham, in the month of May, in a secret convention, his famous "provisional constitution" was adopted. When he returned to Kansas, some time in June, he became more secretive than ever, and went in disguise under the assumed name Capt. Shubel Morgan. Meanwhile his friends in the East were sending him both money and arms. They found it difficult to communicate with him direct, and a box containing fifty Colt's revolvers of navy size came from them to the Kansas central committee, and as its secretary I had charge of them. Captain

\*JAMES MONTGOMERY was born in Ohio December 22, 1814. He received an excellent academic education before removing to Kentucky with his parents in 1837. There he engaged in teaching, afterwards becoming a preacher of the Christian church. He removed to Missouri with his family in 1852. Upon the opening of Kansas to settlement, he purchased of a proslavery man his right to a claim near Mound City, and early became identified with the free-state party. When General Clarke, with his ruffians, drove off the free-state settlers from their claims on the Little Osage in 1856 he took their part, and when he was himself ordered to leave the territory refused to go. The next year many of the free-state men returned, and attempted to recover their homes. The proslavery county officers issued writs for their arrest and many of them were indicted. In 1857 Montgomery raised a military company and successfully took the field against the disturbers of the peace. Thus began what was known as "the troubles in southern Kansas," which continued with brief intervals until merged in the greater conflict of the civil war. In 1861 Montgomery was commissioned colonel of the Third regiment Kansas volunteer infantry and entered the service. Afterwards he was transferred to the Second South Carolina negro regiment and made a raid into Georgia in 1863. February 20, 1864, his regiment took a commendable part in the battle of Olustee, Fla. In October, 1864, he led his neighbors in the Price raid, not being quite recovered from a serious illness. He died December 6, 1871, and was buried on his farm in Linn county. See his letters to Geo. L. Stearns, twenty-four in all, recently given the Society, written between the dates April 14, 1860, and December 10, 1864.

Brown, *alias* Morgan, was then unable to receive or use them. He had no considerable company or following, and at most did not have more than twelve or fourteen men who were acting under his orders up to that time. He was moving about constantly over three or four counties visiting a few friends, but shunning towns and roads as much as possible. When on my way to Topeka one day I remember seeing him walking in a woody ravine, some half a mile from the road, as he was getting out of sight of the road as fast as possible. His appearance or dress was strikingly unique. He wore a long linen duster and a palm-leaf hat with very wide brim, that sloped down nearly to his shoulders, thus hiding his face, quite adapted to his purpose. By that exterior he was well-known to us that summer. What could he do in that situation with fifty revolvers, when he had no camp or abiding place? At a later period matters were changed and he moved more openly.

Hence, the central committee considered the case fully and deemed it best not to hold the arms indefinitely, but to place them in the hands of trusty citizens, at least temporarily, where they would serve some good purpose for Kansas, as the free-state men were poorly armed generally. I was therefore directed by the committee to give them out to men who were both deserving and responsible. From each I took a receipt, giving the number of the revolver, and stipulating that they were only loaned, and would be returned on demand of John Brown. They were thus distributed by me; some went to the southern counties and some to members of a military company in Lawrence called "Stubbs." Later on Brown made an effort to secure some of the revolvers, but I am not able at this time to state how far he succeeded. I have in my possession one of his letters to me on the subject that was never published, of which the following is a copy:

"MONEKA, KAN., August 3, 1858.

"*Mr. Hutchinson:* DEAR SIR—Please send me the names of the persons to whom my revolvers were loaned, the time at which they were given out, if convenient, the residence of the borrower, and the number of each revolver. If the numbers of each cannot be given, please give all the numbers you can, together with the highest and lowest of the whole lot, so that I may know every one bearing an intermediate number to be mine. I have not yet succeeded in obtaining or receiving any. For most of the time since you left me, over three weeks since, I have been near the border, and a fortnight of the time on the claim upon which the wholesale murders were committed, which is upon the line itself and in full view of much of the Missouri country. Our taking such a position seemed to inspire confidence in those who had left their homes, and several have returned to their homes and labors, confident of protection and safety. I am now down with the ague, but hope to be on my legs again soon.

Respectfully yours, JOHN BROWN."

My reply to this letter is published (in part) on page 366 of F. B. Sanborn's "Life and Letters of John Brown."

On further reflection, I think the revolvers were received by our committee while Brown was in Canada. It is impossible for me to keep exact dates of events forty-odd years ago, when I have to depend on memory alone.

"Osawatimie Brown" was Orville C. Brown, from Brooklyn, N. Y., who located and named the town by coining the word out of the names of the two rivers—Osage and Pottawatimie—that unite just below the town site.

John Brown never lived in Osawatimie, nor very near there. When he lived on Pottawatimie creek, near his sons, his nearest post-office was at Lane. To those who knew the real "Osawatimie Brown" as a prominent citizen during our territorial period, it does not appear just to give that appellation to another. All the same, give due praise to John Brown and his brave men, who fought in

the Osawatomie battle. O. C. Brown\* was still living in New York when I last heard of him, about a year ago.

Whenever the border troubles grew alarming in southern Kansas I was generally found there in my place as a journalist, and in that respect I had few or no rivals. No other Kansas correspondent wrote from the scene of action,† to my knowledge, during the period referred to, and I fully realized my responsibility in that important hour, and sought to give the public an impartial version of the events of that historic era. I started from Lawrence to go south about December, 1858, in company with Rev. John E. Stewart, who was widely known at that time as "the fighting preacher," and the name well fitted the man. We both rode ponies, and about noon of the second day fell in with John Brown, who had three of his men with him, all on foot, and, as they were destined to the same section we were, it was soon agreed that we should stay together and "spell" each other in turn by a ride on the ponies. We thus traveled until we reached Moneka, in Linn county, where we stopped with Augustus Wattles who had achieved a national reputation as an antislavery writer and worker. But the point in this story I will now state. John Brown declined to ride one step (except when crossing streams) during those two days, under the plea that his men needed the relief more than he did, and all our persuasion to the contrary was in vain. His unselfish nature stood out so prominently in that instance that it deserves a place in his memoirs. I personally knew he had been a great sufferer the previous fall from chills and fever, and the traces of it were still visible; but all the same, Brown would not ride and see his men walking by the side of him.

We stopped with Mr. Wattles over night, and even longer. His house was two stories, built near the section line of his claim, and his brother, John O. Wattles, also a prominent antislavery writer, had an adjoining claim, and his house, too, was near the line: so the brothers were close neighbors; and both claims joined the town site of Moneka, as I now remember. I think both of their wives on that occasion wore bloomer dresses. I slept that night with John Brown. Our bed was a mattress made of hay, laid upon the floor of the second story. Sleep seemed to be a secondary matter with him. I am sure he talked on that night till the small hours, and his all-absorbing theme was "my work," "my great duty," "my mission," etc., meaning, of course, the liberation of the slaves. He seemed to have no other object in life, no other hope or ambition. The utmost sincerity pervaded his every thought and word. There were some half a dozen freed slaves then harbored there with the Wattles brothers awaiting marching orders. In the morning all were gathered with us around the breakfast table. The unwritten law of John Brown would permit no separate table for the ex-slaves. I remember the scene as if it were but yesterday. Our whole repast consisted of mush and milk, and for this John Brown most fervently asked God's blessing, while the sable faces bowed low in humble thankfulness. The retrospect of our breakfast that morning is of itself a most impressive sermon that might be extended for pages.

Following this I spent some two weeks mingling with the people, to feel the public pulse and learn the whole truth. These southern counties were on the verge of another civil outbreak. A truce had been previously made between the governor and Captain Montgomery and John Brown, but the governor's forces had not lived up to it, and the people were threatening another civil war. To up-

\*See foot-note, page 325, volume VII, Historical Society's Collections.

†The author has forgotten William P. Tomlinson's "Kansas in 1858," written during that summer and published in 1859, from notes made while riding in the company of Montgomery and his men.

hold the olive branch of peace, I traversed two counties for signers to an instrument I prepared that first bore these five signatures: Augustus Wattles, John Brown, Wm. Hutchinson, James Montgomery, O. P. Bayne. The paper was very generally signed, and later it was carried to Bourbon county, with the same result. There was a temporary lull in affairs, and we began to hope the worst was over. But the storm center soon developed in a new quarter. The president and cabinet at Washington became restless because "the robbers, Montgomery and Brown," were not arrested and punished, and the affray was renewed by the offer of large rewards for their capture. The *New York Times* even gave vent to a red-hot editorial, directed especially against the amnesty I had aided in preparing for southern Kansas settlers. To this I wrote a two-column rejoinder that Mr. Raymond declined to publish.

#### MY LETTER TO MY WIFE.

While at Mapleton, on the trip I have been describing, I wrote a letter to my wife that describes the atmosphere I was breathing and the high tension under which I was acting so much better than anything I could write to-day, that I shall venture to copy it here. Although it has been preserved, it was never given publicity, and as much of it relates to Kansas events that have now become historic, I think my presumption may be warranted:

"MAPLETON, Monday eve., January 3, 1859.

"*Dear Helen:* I must write you a word to-night to let you know of my whereabouts and progress. I stayed at Palmyra the first night. Next night reached Paola, where I began to hear war news. Many were greatly alarmed for the future, and some proslavery men have lately left. Four Missourians were over a few nights before and stole four horses near Stanton. Next day I heard at Osawatomie that fifteen men had gone south to join Montgomery, and the people generally seemed timid about sustaining the defensive movements. I stopped next with Mr. Arthur, and such another place does n't exist in Kansas. That night it snowed, and my bed, as usual, was on the floor. House open without a door. The door space was near me, and all night long the wind and snow blew on me, and in the morning snow was three inches deep all over my bed. I stayed there because I wanted to talk with him, for he had been down south with Sheriff Walker, and I wanted the facts. Of course, Walker went back to Lawrence without arresting anybody or advising anybody else to do so. I don't believe he comforted the governor much when he saw him and reported. The next day I met companies from old Brown's camp going north, and learned they had broken up. Have heard the full history of Brown's going into Missouri, and shall justify him. I met with Brown and his boys about noon that day, Thursday. We went to Wattles's that night together, and we were together all night and next day, talking much with him and Wattles and others who called on us. They took special pains to have a war council on my account, and appeared to have great confidence in the opinion of 'the man from Lawrence,' as some termed me. I am so vain as to think my advice did have some good effect. I recommended *one more* trial for a settlement before resorting to rash measures, and they accepted my plan, and we drew up a paper for signatures, and Wattles started to circulate it among both parties.

"I went Friday night to Montgomery's, but he had just left a half-hour before for this settlement; so I put after him across the prairie, and overtook him at Lost creek, five miles from here, and there we stopped and talked till morning. Next morning started about sunrise, and as there was to be a meeting\* Saturday of the settlers of this county to devise a plan for peace, I went directly with Montgomery to the meeting, some three miles from here, and there I met Mr. Burnett and other Vermont friends. Had a large meeting, and I was glad to be present. I furnished the resolutions that were adopted. Montgomery made a good speech, and every man on the ground seemed to fully indorse him. That night I came here, and have remained till now. . . . (I here describe some work on my Mapleton claim.)

"The whole country along the border is in arms, and I fear the end is dis-

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\*See letter in the *Lawrence Republican* of January 13, 1859, dated Dayton, Bourbon county, January 1, containing the proceedings of this meeting.

tant if the governor persists in enforcing bogus laws and sustaining bogus officers. The blood is up on this side, and they wont stop now for trifles, from late reports. When I left Moneka I expected to hear every hour that *somebody* had, the night previous, murdered Matlock (one of Captain Hamilton's Linn county murderers), who escaped from Paris in the fall, and old Jackson, across the line, near the trading post, who is one of the most notorious ruffians now living; but news has come here to-day that Jackson is killed and his house burned; that the Kansas settlers had rallied in the vicinity to prevent an invasion across the line.

"To-day some 500 men from Fort Scott crossed this river (Little Osage) near the state line going north, and we all expect warm work is near. Four or five have been here to day after Montgomery from different points, as they supposed he was here with me, but he went to the Marmaton yesterday to see Griffith, and has not returned. He has doubtless learned of the movements and is probably *somewhere* making due preparation. Men are moving over the country in every direction, and it seems to me like old times. I don't intend to go into the conflict unless it comes to the worst, but shall keep in communication with the leaders and advise as I think necessary. I cannot now *write* the *cause* of all this, but know it well. I am looking for the most important results to Missouri as well as to Kansas. Unless it culminates soon in an honorable amnesty it will carry the war 'into Africa' in earnest. I cannot say I hope for this, but I greatly fear it.

"I wrote to the *Times* yesterday and shall try to get later news for another letter to-morrow. I cannot tell when I shall start for home. As long as the present fire rages I cannot leave, for this is headquarters for news, and I want to get it for the public. At best, I cannot start before Thursday: to return then it will take four or five days, as I go, for the trip, but I may not start this week. If not, I shall write you again or the *Republican*. I got my horse saddled this morning to start for Montgomery's quarters and Fort Scott, but changed my plan. . . . Keep patient till I come, and I shall lose no time. WILLIAM."

After my return to Lawrence, in January, 1859, Montgomery, who was then an "outlaw," as declared by the governor, came to my house one evening. The legislature was then in session at Lawrence, devoting much of their time to the disturbances in Linn and Bourbon counties. Governor Medary was not so bad at heart, nor so morally blind, that he could not see the merit of our free-state policy in general, but he was the federal executive. Montgomery well knew all this; hence he asked if I thought it possible for him to have an interview with the governor, and I at once favored the proposal, and, besides, offered to be the medium. The governor was stopping at the Elldridge House, where I called upon him about nine p. m., and, after breaking it gently, informed him that Captain Montgomery was at my house, and would be glad to see him. He seemed rather disturbed at first, but it grew less preposterous, the more we talked, that the man for whose head he had offered a reward should visit the executive chamber. Finally he said: "If you will put it off until after eleven o'clock this evening you may bring him here, and I will hear what he has to say." This program was carried out strictly. Montgomery told his story in mild but earnest language. He was a fine talker, and his tones were pathetic and his facts convincing, even to a federal officer. They parted as friends. The parties to this incident never gave it publicity, as far as I know.

#### THE LINN COUNTY OR TRADING-POST MASSACRE.

In the order of dates, I will turn the calendar back to 1858, to the notable murder of five men and the severe wounding of five others by Captain Hamelton and his men, near the trading post in Linn county, near the state line, May 19, 1858. This was one of the most atrocious of cold-blooded murders. The victims were all peaceable free-state men, taken from their fields, marched defenseless into a ravine, and shot down by Hamelton's men until all were believed to be dead. Five of them survived. Two, named Reed and Hairgrove, were brought to Lawrence on beds, after a three-day journey. They reported that



the others who survived were too severely wounded to be taken. One of the wounded, named Asa Snyder, was a young man from Wisconsin, I think, who had stopped in Lawrence on his way into the territory, and while there made many friends, who felt an unusual interest in his case. This led to an effort for his rescue. He was reported as left at a farmer's cabin, in the enemy's country, severely wounded. I at once volunteered to go for him. Colonel Eldridge offered to furnish a team. I started with a span of mules, and a light covered road-wagon, the last day of May. The distance was too great to be reached in one day—over fifty miles, I think: but the second morning I was at the bedside of the wounded man. His wound was in the arm, and he was suffering most intensely. The arm was swollen to twice its natural size: it had been but imperfectly dressed—the bone was fractured—and his life seemed to depend upon the best of nursing and care. All were agreed that it was exceedingly hazardous for him to be moved, except in the care of a skilled surgeon, as the wound would require dressing *en route*. Mr. Snyder himself plead to have a physician go with him. There was no one in that vicinity available. Most reluctantly I was compelled to return to Lawrence without him, and obtain a physician there to undertake the task. Dr. S. C. Harrington, a popular physician of that city, came to the rescue, drove back the same mule team, and in due time brought Mr. Snyder to Lawrence, when, after protracted nursing and care, he was restored, and a valuable life was saved.

Many thrilling chapters of Kansas history have been written depicting the horrors of that bloody scene that kindled a red flame through southern Kansas. Montgomery with his followers were immediately on the trail of Hamelton's men.

No better picture can be given of the condition of affairs in Linn and Bourbon counties, following the said massacre, than to give some details of my drive with the mule team already noted. The people of the route were in arms as far as they dared to be. No farm work was thought of, but men and women were gathered together in groups for protection in cabins that furnished the best defense. For miles I saw no human being on the roads or in the fields, but an occasional cabin would reveal their presence peering through the door cracks, and my appearance with the mule team was an unsolved mystery. I finally stopped over night with a well-to-do farmer named Wm. Hutchin, on the Osage river, and I found about twenty of the neighbors gathered together there, as I have before described, for protection. The rumor had just arrived an hour before that about twenty of the mounted Missouri horde had been seen near the state line. Mr. Hutchin had had stock and grain in abundance, but he had acted for the free-state forces as general quartermaster until they were about exhausted. On retiring that night, Mrs. Hutchin superintended the full equipping of all the household, and even her children as well as her guests were given full directions as to the location of powder-horns, caps, shot, and balls, and all the guns were within easy reach. She told us she had been drilling her girls in shooting until they were skilled in the art, and that she had only had two nights' rest in two weeks. This will serve as a sample of what some women in Kansas endured, as well as the men. The balance of the journey next day was more like driving through a graveyard than anything I can compare it to. The dark pall of the Hamelton massacre had not lifted, nor did it for weeks afterwards.

#### THE KILLING OF L. D. MOORE AND OTHERS.

In the fall of 1860 the troubles in southern Kansas were renewed. The amnesty of 1859 had been strictly kept by the free-state settlers, but the cohorts of slavery in Missouri, over the border, were restless, and their allies in the territory were eager to breed dissensions. At length they combined under a secret organi-

zation, called "dark-lanternites," and several murders were committed by them before the free-state men retaliated. In November, 1860, I was living on my claim in Mapleton with my wife. One Lester D. Moore, who lived some two miles east of that place, was known as one of the "dark-lantern" order, who had perpetrated outrages on the free-state men. Doctor Jennison, or Captain Jennison, of Mound City, as he was called, became somewhat a leading spirit, and organized a small posse and took the field. One morning in November, about sunrise, he appeared in front of my cabin door with six or eight of his men, mounted, and called for breakfast for his party. He told us at once they had just killed Mr. Moore the night before, because he refused to surrender. They had offered him a trial if he would surrender, but he said he would not, but would fight. Jennison's men then shot him. They tied their horses to my fence, came in, and we gave them a breakfast of the best we had in our primitive home.\*

It is useless to attempt to find a pattern for our conscience to-day, as to the moral aspect of such an act on the part of Jennison, to fit the conditions which existed with us then. It is quite enough to say we fed them just as freely as if they had been missionaries to our land from the Chinese. The "dark-lantern order" had seemed to beget a certain obliquity of moral vision that cannot be appreciated, in the absence of the conditions that then and there surrounded us. Retaliation only followed prolonged provocation. An appeal to the courts at that period would have been idle, so far as obtaining justice for any free-state man, as the juries at Fort Scott all belonged to the "dark-lantern order," with Judge Joseph Williams† as the dispenser of injustice. It was from either the folly, the fear or the ignorance of Judge Williams, that much of the public disorder in that section arose. It was about November 24, 1860, that the judge sent forth a tissue of falsehoods to the Eastern public.‡ He represented that Montgomery and his men had attacked Fort Scott and molested his court: that they had sacked Paris, and had entered Missouri with arms and munitions sent them by Eastern friends. Not one syllable of this effusion was true, as all who knew Captain Montgomery best well understood.

From my personal relations with Montgomery, and from his own declarations, I can say that his position and that of his men was a high moral one, above all personality or personal revenge. They were not dealing with politics but with principles. They were ready to protect democrats and all alike while they behaved equally well. They never asked a man his politics, but if any member of his company was found pilfering or looting he was summarily dismissed or threatened with hanging. Some of his cast-off men afterwards became outlaws, for which, no doubt, the captain's shoulders bore the burden. If the people of the slave states wanted their negroes they had only to keep them at home, for

\* See letter of C. R. Jennison to Geo. L. Stearns, November 28, 1860, relative to the hanging of Russell Hinds by this band, for kidnapping.

† JOSEPH WILLIAMS was born December 28, 1801, in Greensburg, Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania, and early in life removed to Iowa. He was appointed associate justice of the territory of Iowa in 1838 by President Van Buren, and was continued in this office until 1847, when Iowa became a state. He then served as chief justice until 1848. In 1849 he was again called to the supreme bench, and served until 1855. In 1857 he was appointed by President Buchanan associate justice of Kansas territory, serving from June 3, 1857, to January, 1861. He was assigned to the southern district of Kansas, and resided at Fort Scott, where he acquired, through the purchase of land in the vicinity, some property. In 1863 he was appointed by President Lincoln to a seat on a judicial tribunal for the trial of civil crimes at Memphis, Tenn., on which he served until the close of the war, when he visited Iowa, and, returning to his home in Kansas, died at Fort Scott, March 31, 1870. A sixteen-page sketch of Judge Williams, by T. S. Parvin, with portrait, is contained in the Iowa Historical Record of January, 1896. The Kansas Historical Society also has a brief biographical sketch in manuscript.

‡ See Judge Williams's letters to Governors Denver, Medary, and Secretary Walsh, Historical Society Collections, volume V, pages 539, 554, 567.

the moment a slave set his foot on Kansas soil it was his edict that he was free and should be protected at all hazards. Kansas had been secured to freedom at heavy cost, and they declared it should not be made a hunting-ground. They ordered no man out of the country. Horse thieves and man thieves, after trial by jury, it was decreed, should alike suffer full penalties. This digression has seemed proper here, to show the aims and purposes of the man who figured most in these southern Kansas troubles.

#### A FORT SCOTT EPISODE.

On December 3, 1860, the public-land sales took place at Fort Scott, and this was made a pretext for sending General Harney from Fort Leavenworth with a small force of dragoons and infantry "to keep the peace." In due course I visited the fort, to keep pace with the passing events. The beautiful plaza in the center of the town was under military duress, and I soon found myself confronted by presented bayonets. After remaining a day and writing some letters for the press, I began to realize that Fort Scott was not likely to be a healthy place for me. Vague rumors, at first, that I might be the abolition journalist, grew to very formidable proportions when I found myself surrounded in the hotel office by a wild and angered mob that threatened and swore at me, until I plainly saw that I was in a hotbed of Southern hatred and proslavery vindictiveness. I frankly admitted who and what I was. When my situation was nearing its climax, and I felt that my personal safety was most critical, I was taken out of the room by Mr. Clark, I think it was, who had been an officer there in the land-office. He took me by a back way to his house, where he said I would be safe for an hour or two. This was about nine o'clock P. M., December 4. Mr. Clark proved a friend indeed, but he said he was afraid it would compromise him for me to remain with him all night, and he advised me to start out about midnight to get away the best I could.

After thanking him most heartily, I started, as he suggested, to follow up the valley of the Marmaton in the midnight darkness. This stream and the Little Osage, on which Mapleton is situated, are some ten or twelve miles apart, running nearly parallel, and their branches intertwine at places. It was a most thankless task to thread my way up the Marmaton some ten miles, then across the divide between the two streams, following the ravines so as to avoid exposure upon the high prairie, and make my objective point, at Mapleton. I escaped from Fort Scott without discovery, and found great relief from my red-tongued revilers, even in the loneliness and quiet of a midnight flight. The tirade of threats and curses to which I was treated in the early evening caused me to fear they would intercept me before reaching Mapleton. Hence, I took the more circuitous route, making at least twenty miles' travel, and it was nearly noon the next day before I arrived at widow Blake's, who lived on the border of the town. She was one of those belonging to the Vermont colony who took claims in the vicinity of Mapleton.

#### MOUND CITY AND CAPTAIN MONTGOMERY.

It was about a week after the Fort Scott incident, when renewed efforts were made by Marshals Dimon and Campbell, of the fort, to capture Jennison, Seamen, Montgomery, the Corbins, and other so called abolitionists, and they were seeking the aid of the military, through Governor Medary, to accomplish their ends; that is, the marshals and their proslavery cohorts were doing this. While General Harney remained at Fort Scott with the dragoons, a company of infantry under Captain Lyon came to Mound City late in the afternoon, under orders to capture Captain Montgomery. I had anticipated their arrival, and was there a day in advance of the military.

It was well understood by us that Captain Lyon (who afterwards became a general) was in sympathy with our cause, while acting as a branch of the administration. I had met him on other occasions, and felt free to visit his camp soon after his arrival at Mound City. He well understood my views relative to Captain Montgomery, and I well understood his relation to the free-state and pro-slavery issues in general. I cannot remember now by what process or by whose advances the conclusion was reached, but I can state the important fact, that after dark that evening—I think it was December 6—I engaged a team, and, with the captain, drove up the creek some five miles to Montgomery's cabin, where we found him at home, and their meeting was most cordial. The general points in the situation were freely discussed, and it was easy to arrange the next day's program, so that Montgomery was to be with a friend near Osawatimie by the time the troops were confronting his "fort," as it was called. Captain Lyon acted well his part in the affair for the protection of Montgomery.\* In a few hours the troops were marching on. I am not quite sure (forty years is a long time to remember details), but I think there were also dragoons and a battery with the expedition sent by General Harney, because it was considered of great importance to capture the brigand Montgomery and his "fort." I think it was before daylight that the forces were divided into several squads, and they charged upon the fated "fort" from different directions.

To their great surprise the captain was not inside of it. Neither was there anything found to verify the extravagant yarns they had been circulating, that he was maintaining a fortification with 200 armed men, and was provided with provisions for a year, etc. In fact, his cabin was a very unpretending affair. Until the previous fall, it had consisted of a one-story log cabin about ten by fourteen feet, in which his wife and eight children had lived, besides the frequent addition of a number of guests, as I personally know from experience. Feeling the need of more room, he had recently built an addition on the front side of about the same size, or twelve by fourteen feet, of hewn timber.† On the front side of this addition he had left a space between the timbers about a foot wide, some six feet from the floor, to serve the purpose of a window, and probably such other purposes as circumstances might suggest. When this army of invasion found no armed resistance at the "fort," they commenced a general search through the neighborhood for any and all of the several outlaws, whose names the marshal carried in his hat. But no arrests were made, and General Harney and his army could only "march down again." During my stay at Mound City on that occasion I was the guest of Harvey Smith, then a prominent citizen of the place, and I think his nephew, Edward Smith, is still residing there.

I can give no better description of the situation of affairs at this time than to copy an effusion of mine, dated at Mapleton, December 15, 1860, written for the *Lawrence Republican*:

A KANSAS PARODY.

In Linn and Bourbon, down below,  
All breathless came the Kansas foe,  
With martial glory all aglow,  
And Williams running rapidly.

Medary saw another sight—  
Five thousand men all armed for fight,  
With hearts defiant in the right,  
Led on by brave Montgomery.

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\* See foot-notes about Nathaniel Lyon in articles entitled "The Territorial and Military Combine at Fort Riley," and "Among the Sovereign Squats."

† See letter of James Montgomery, December 12, 1860, among Historical Society manuscripts, relative to General Harney, and the enlargement and fortification of the log house.

The troops by Harney fast arrayed  
 Were frantic for their bloody trade,  
 And furious; every marshal bade  
 Them join the royal infamy.

Then shook the camp, with curses riven;  
 The Riley boys, to battle driven,  
 Were louder in their oaths to heaven  
 Than Williams acting comedy.

But fiercer yet the strife shall glow;  
 Missouri adds the seventh woe  
 By sending *Frost* to chill their foe,  
 While Williams fiddles merrily.

'Tis night; but scarce the dial run  
 Ere Campbell cried: "The war 's begun!  
 Mount! mount, dragoons! Ere morrow's sun  
 We 'll slay the red Montgomery."

The contest deepens. Lo the braves  
 Rush early to the verge of graves.  
 Wave, Colby: all thy warrants wave,  
 And charge each empty domicile.

Few — none — are caught where many meet;  
 Disgrace shall be their winding-sheet:  
 And every boy that walks the street  
 Will hoot this federal fiddle-dee.

#### THE FIRST TEMPERANCE CRUSADE IN KANSAS.

Since I began to write these tardy pages, the public has been treated to the Quixotic campaign of Mrs. Carrie Nation in Kansas against the saloons, or "joints," as she calls them, and this has induced me to again turn back the calendar and describe an incident that occurred at Lawrence in 1856, in which my late wife was a prominent actor. The town was mostly settled by citizens from the land of steady habits, who were a law unto themselves, especially while we were without an organized city government, and public opinion was for a long time strongly adverse to the sale or use of intoxicants. But gradually, as in all Western towns, the border element crept in, until it was whispered that a liquor den across the ravine, in a log cabin, was slyly plying its vocation. This was immediately followed by a spontaneous movement by a number of the leading women of the town to destroy every drop of intoxicants on the town site. Resolve was at once followed by action. Some ten or twelve women met, armed themselves with axes, hatchets, and hammers, or whatever they could best use for the purpose, marched over the ravine to the said log cabin, and, without giving the occupant any choice in the matter, they seized bottles, casks, barrels, or whatever contained the contraband article, threw or rolled it into the street, knocked out the cask heads with their axes, until every drop was spilled. To commemorate their triumph, a photographer was on the spot, and a fine picture of the scene was secured. In that picture, which was in my possession for many years, my wife stood in the foreground, with ax in hand, near a demolished barrel, and the other women and their "tools" were well displayed. I cannot, after so long a lapse, recall with certainty the names of all the crusaders, except that, besides my wife, I am sure Mrs. Fred. W. Read was one; and probably Mrs. L. Bullene, Mrs. G. W. Brown, Mrs. John Speer, Mrs. Doctor Harrington, Mrs. B. W. Woodward, Mrs. Paul Brooks, Mrs. Samuel N. Wood and others were in the company. This raid was a complete success, and it was a long time after it before a venture was again made to sell liquor openly in Lawrence. In view of the

late notoriety of the "hatchet brigade" in Kansas, I feel justified in referring to the part my wife took in the first spilling of intoxicating liquors in Kansas.

In this connection I will go a step further, and note the fact that I was a zealous opponent of the liquor traffic, and especially my aversion to the opening of a public bar was so great, that when Colonel Eldridge, a year or two later, opened the first one in the city, in the Eldridge House, which he kept, I avoided entering his hotel on that account. But soon after we organized the first city government, under a charter of our own making, and under it I was elected the first city assessor. In that capacity, I remember, I reluctantly visited the hotel, and had to "face the bar" and appraise the contents. This was in 1857.

I understand that Lawrence has always been considered a temperance city, or comparatively so, and that there is to-day no material there for Mrs. Nation's hatchet. Who knows to what extent the women's crusade of 1856 has been a factor in the good work?

#### CERTIFICATES AND COMMISSIONS.

As vouchers, somewhat, for some of the incidents herein described, I will give place here for copies of some of the evidence of public confidence I received during our pioneer struggles. I was appointed and served upon the staff of Col. J. H. Lane, of which I have now no written evidence. Those that follow I now have in my possession.

*"To all who shall see these presents—greeting:*

"WHEREAS, I have appointed Wm. Hutchinson to the office of aide-de-camp of the first division of Kansas volunteers, raised in the territory by authority of the people of Kansas, to defend the citizens of Kansas territory from threatened destruction by foreign invaders:

"THEREFORE, Know ye, that, in the name and by the authority of the said people, I do commission the said Wm. Hutchinson as aforesaid to serve from the date hereof until the said force retires from the territory.

"In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, at Lawrence city, the 27th day of November, 1855.

CHARLES ROBINSON,

*Major general commanding the volunteers of Kansas territory."*

At this period we were in the midst of what was termed "the Wakarusa war." Very soon after I received the following:

"LAWRENCE, December 3, 1855.

"Wm. Hutchinson: DEAR SIR—Having confidence in your integrity and patriotism, I herewith appoint you adjutant general of the Kansas militia.

Very respectfully, C. ROBINSON, *Commander-in-Chief.*

"G. W. DEITZLER, *Secretary.*"

#### "OFFICE OF THE STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

LAWRENCE, December 1, 1856.

"THIS CERTIFIES that Wm. Hutchinson, a member of the Kansas state central committee, has been appointed a special commissioner to represent to the governments and people of the Northern states the necessity of emigration to Kansas and the investment of capital as the only means remaining to secure to its people the enjoyment of free institutions and their constitutional rights, and we recommend Mr. Hutchinson to the friends of freedom generally as a gentleman entirely reliable in his communications, and ask that he may be received as a fully accredited representative of the committee.

S. E. MARTIN,

"H. MILES MOORE,

*President Kansas State Central Committee.*

*Secretary of Kansas State Central Committee."*

There was more contained in this paper than appears upon its surface, and to make plain its importance I must turn the light upon the position our central committee was in just at that time, to show why I was thus commissioned. J. M. Winchell, of the same committee, was also given similar authority. The administration of the central committee from its inception had been every way ac-

ceptable to the people of the territory in all its civil, financial, distributive and protective functions until a few weeks before this date. I should have mentioned before that there was also a national central committee created in the states to cooperate with ours, and composed generally of men of high standing and devoted friends of Kansas, who resided in Boston, New York, Chicago, and other places. It was their province to collect money and material aid for our people, and it was ours to distribute the same and render returns. Many thousands of dollars in value were thus handled by our committee, and everything had worked harmoniously until the national committee made some changes in its personnel, when Thaddeus Hyatt became its president and W. F. M. Army\* its general agent. Mr. Army at once came to Kansas and immediately assumed supreme authority. He was a supremely selfish, ambitious and unscrupulous man. In the fullest sense he should be described as a "bad egg." From his entrance upon the scene the friction and disharmony began. Why the national committee, composed of such men as Joseph Medill, L. D. Webster, and Horace White, of Chicago; George L. Stearns, Dr. S. G. Howe, and F. B. Sanborn, of Boston, could place so responsible a trust in the hands of such a man was, and still is, an unsolved mystery.

Mr. Hyatt was a good man at heart, but of the easy-going temperament, and in this matter allowed Army to control him. They—that is, Army and Hyatt—pretended to introduce a different system of distribution from that we had practiced, and ultimately open charges were brought against us. But the hypocrisy of their pretended reforms was soon exposed, by the discovery that they were using money and clothing for unworthy purposes and for their personal advantage, by a connivance to colonize a town to be named Hyatt, and a county to be named Army.

Something like an open rupture between the committees followed. It was then that our central committee met in council, that resulted in the said commissions to myself and to Mr. J. M. Winchell to represent the facts before the people of the East, and especially to meet the national committee at their head office in New York city. I was fortunate in having the cooperation of Mr. Winchell in that delegated task, as he was a gentleman of refinement and culture, amply qualified to sustain the merits of our Kansas administration before the Eastern public, to whom we were sent, as well as before the national committee, at their rooms in New York. We then, on the 30th of January, 1857, made a lengthy report, that was widely published, setting forth the salient points in issue with the two committees. Whatever the results, we felt that our task there ended. It was believed that a majority of the national committee were with us, and practically all of the people of Kansas, who were the beneficiaries. I have always thought that I was never entrusted with a more responsible mission than this. This explanation will make clearer the paper referred to.

#### MY FIRST OFFICE IN LAWRENCE.

"*Mr. William Hutchinson:* This is to certify that, at an election held at the office of Messrs. Ladd & Prentiss, on Monday, the 13th day of July, A. D. 1857, you were duly elected one of the aldermen for this city.

"Attest:

G. C. BRACKETT, *Clerk.*

HENRY CAMPBELL, { *Judges of*  
A. D. SEARL, { *Election.*"

I think it was the next year that I was elected assessor for the city, as before mentioned.

"LAWRENCE, KAN., September 12, 1857.

"THIS IS TO CERTIFY, That at a state election held in the tenth district on the 3d day of August, A. D. 1857, William Hutchinson was duly elected a representative for said district to the next session of the general assembly of the state of Kansas.  
C. ROBINSON."

\*For biography of Mr. Army, see page 203, volume VII, Historical Society's Collections.

It was under this that I took my seat in the lower house at Topeka, as before stated.

THE WYANDOTTE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.

"*Territory of Kansas.* I, Samuel Medary, governor of said territory, do hereby certify that William Hutchinson was duly elected as a member of the constitutional convention to assemble at Wyandotte, in said territory, on the first Tuesday in July, A. D. 1859, for the district composed of the county of Douglas, in said territory, according to the returns received by me from the county tribunal of said county on file in my office.

"Given under my hand and the seal of the territory, this 5th day of July, A. D. 1859. By the governor. S. MEDARY.

"Attest: HUGH S. WALSH, *Secretary of Kansas Territory.*"

Kansas had been prolific in constitutional conventions. First the Topeka, then the Lecompton and then the Leavenworth constitutional conventions,\* but these all "died a borning." The Wyandotte convention was a representative body that entered at once upon its arduous labors. J. M. Winchell,† of Council City, was chosen president, and he soon announced the standing committees, to the number of sixteen. I was made chairman of the committee on preamble and bill of rights. I was also a member of the committee on ordinance and public debt and the committee on finance and taxation. The convention was strictly a business body, and in about four weeks completed the state constitution under which the people are now living, and during the forty years of its trial I think there have been but very slight amendments.

I have no desire to claim especial merit in what was so well and so expeditiously accomplished. To our president, Mr. Winchell, very much was due in that connection. I will mention one provision, however, for which I may claim, I think, a personal responsibility. Our committee was given the fixing of the boundaries of the future state. The western boundary became an open question. As a territory, our limits extended to the twenty-seventh meridian of longitude, the same as Nebraska, but our committee made the twenty-fifth meridian of longitude the western boundary of Kansas.

At that period very little was known of the physical geography of that region involving the boundary question. After availing myself of all possible sources of information, I was led to the conclusion that there was a wide belt of comparative barrenness along the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth meridians of longitude, while beyond westward it grew more fertile nearer the mountains. Hence we believed it would have become a hardship for the inhabitants of the said fertile section to cross the barren district to reach their state capital, and that they would prefer to belong with a community lying west of them, as they now do, in the state of Colorado.

I was also an earnest laborer to secure as far as practicable the elective franchise to women, especially in municipal and educational affairs. Mrs. C. I. H. Nichols, who was a most able advocate for her sex, was present during the term

\* See foot-note, pages 132, 133, volume VII, Historical Society's Collections.

† JAMES M. WINCHELL was born at Avon, Livingston county, New York, in 1823, and died at Hyde Park, N. Y., February 2, 1877. In 1848 he graduated from the State Normal School, at Albany, and began teaching in the public schools of Syracuse, giving some attention to journalism. In 1853 he removed to New York city, and in 1854 to Council City, now Burlingame, Kan. He was delegate to the first national republican convention, at Philadelphia, a member of the Leavenworth and president of the Wyandotte constitutional conventions. He was a member of the territorial house of representatives in 1860 and 1861. He was correspondent of the *New York Times* during the Kansas troubles, and war correspondent during the rebellion, having charge of the *Times* bureau in Washington in 1862 and 1863. He was then connected with the management of the Kansas Pacific railroad for a short time, and in 1864 was secretary of the national committee organized to urge the nomination of Salmon P. Chase for the presidency. He then engaged in mining, until, in 1867, he retired from active pursuits, and purchased the estate at Hyde Park, on the Hudson. He was connected editorially with the *New York Times* at his death. His wife has given the Society many of his Kansas manuscripts.



of the convention and was given several hearings by the committee on "electors and elections." While there were many members willing to adopt the views of Mrs. Nichols, a majority could not be secured. It was simply too early. It is gratifying to know that her dream has since been in part realized.

Mrs. Nichols was then living in Quindaro, a few miles from Wyandotte. I had formerly known her as an editor of a paper in Brattleboro, Vt.

Relative to my difficulty with Mr. E. M. Hubbard, who was a member from Doniphan county in that convention, I will simply refer to a letter I wrote for the Historical Society to Judge Adams, its late secretary, some three years ago, stating the material facts in the case, and would ask that the said letter may be adopted here as a foot-note.\*

I was more interested than most others, while a member of the convention, in the subject of Kansas' claims against the general government for losses sustained during our early troubles at the hands of federal officials or their allies, and I was willing to make it a condition precedent to our admission as a state that Kansas should be indemnified by the government for such losses. But I could not succeed in that measure. It was, however, made the subject of a resolution in the schedule affixed to the constitution, in the form of a request that Congress pass an act to indemnify us, etc.

What I have done in later years to forward that measure is fully shown in a paper already with the Historical Society, and published in volume 6 of its series of Historical Collections.

This would naturally end my story as a pioneer. Soon after the constitutional convention, Kansas was admitted as a state. In the early '60's I removed to Washington, D. C., where I still reside, but have preserved my legal residence in Kansas, and have voted there at most of the presidential elections. I have ever cherished a deep interest in Kansas affairs. Our hearts were cemented in the early trials. When the old settlers celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the settlement of the state, at Bismarck Grove, Lawrence, September 15 and 16, 1879, I took part with them and delivered one of the addresses.

This address is published in the Kansas Memorial, proceedings quarter-century celebration, 1879, pp. 77-82.

As I reread these jottings of my early Kansas wanderings, it seems to revive other incidents more numerous even than those I have noted: yet these reminiscences that I have gathered in with no little effort seem as dry leaves from my far, far distant pathway, and I am fully conscious that there are fewer remaining to fall.

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\*"WASHINGTON, D. C., November 14, 1898.

"My dear Mr. Adams: I wish to make a statement to you as the secretary of the Historical Society of Kansas that is both personal to myself as well as a matter of Kansas history. I refer to my connection with the Kansas constitutional convention that framed the Wyandotte constitution, under which we were admitted into the Union. When the session was nearing its close, I was charged by E. M. Hubbard, a member from Doniphan county, with an attempt to bribe him by offering him a city lot in Lawrence for his vote in favor of that city for the state capital. A committee was appointed to investigate the case and I denied the charge before the said committee. After the committee had taken all the testimony offered in the case they declined to make any recommendation, and no direct action was taken. Yet Mr. Hubbard charged me with perjury because of my denial. It became to me, therefore, a serious matter. I had never till then, nor have I since, been accused of any wrong action, and my conscience has never been my accuser. There are but few living to-day who were in that convention, and I must soon join the larger company. Before I go I want to tell the whole story of the alleged bribery, and I know of no better place to tell it than to your Society, to be used as you may deem proper. Lyman Allen and C. W. Babcock, of Lawrence, came into my room at Wyandotte one evening when the capital question was pending, and said they had come down to work for Lawrence, and had city lots they were offering to secure the measure. Some time afterward I did mention to Mr. Hubbard in substance what my neighbors had told me, but in no way intimating that I had any lots to offer, for at that time I did not own a lot in Lawrence. I had no thought of any improper action toward Mr. Hubbard, but merely spoke of my neighbors' zeal in the case, and was greatly surprised when he made the charge against me in open convention a day or two later. I did not think it best at the time to tell the whole story as to Allen and Babcock, and have never before told it to any person until this hour. Much to my further surprise, these neighbors never came near me, or had a word to offer, while the case was being investigated. Whether a vindication or not, I have stated the facts, and leave the case here.

Yours most truly,

WM. HUTCHINSON."













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